



Interest Groups Timetable for May

Date	Time	Group	Venue or Meeting point
Tue 1st	9:45 for 10 am start	Walking	The Okeover Arms Mappleton, Ashbourne, Derbys, DE6 2AB
Wed 2nd	10:00 am	Music Appreciation	40 Willesley Gdns
Wed 2nd	2:00 pm	Computer	16 Winchester Way
Thu 3rd	10:00 am	Digital Photography	2 Marlborough Way
Thu 3rd	10:00 am	Recorder	Joan's house
Mon 7th	7-9 pm	Bridge	Ivanhoe Social Club
Tue 8th	10:00 am	Calligraphy	Ann's. To write a verse from a hymn in Gothic script- perhaps plan to illuminate first letter
Tue 8th	1:30 pm	Literature	28 Willesley Gardens
Wed 9th	2:00 pm	Family History	2 Marlborough Way
Thu 10th	12 for 12.30 pm	Lunch	Angel Inn, Coleorton
Mon 14th	9.45 for 10 am start	Medium Walks	Meet at the Globe, Snarestone
Mon 14th	2-4 pm	Bridge	Hood Park Leisure Centre
Tue 15th	9:15 for 9:30 am start	Walking	The Belper Arms, Newton Burgoland
Wed 16th	10:00 am	Drawing and painting	Megan's House Theme 'Transport through the Ages'
Wed 16th	2:30 pm	Quiz	Bull and Lion, Packington
Thu 17th	10:00 am	Recorder	Joan's house
Thu 17th	1:00 pm	Gardening	Paul & Sheila's Garden Party & plant swap. Free refreshments and drink
Fri 18th	10:00 am	Short Walks	Meet at Ticknall village hall for a walk into Calke
Mon 21st	2:00 pm	Computer	16 Winchester Way
Mon 21st	7-9 pm	Bridge	Ivanhoe Social Club
Thu 24th		Industrial Heritage	Bristol coach trip
Thu 24th	TBA	History	Coach trip to Bristol. See the Industrial Heritage page for full details
Thu 24th	8:00 am	Trips and Outings	Bristol All day visit. The coach departs Royal Hotel at 8 am, leaving Bristol at 6 pm to arrive back at 8.30 pm approx.
Mon 28th	2-4 pm	Bridge	Hood Park Leisure Centre
Thu 31st	2:00 pm	Arts & Crafts	Shirley's house
Thu 31st	7 for 7.30 pm	Supper Club	Turpin's, Twycross. NOTE the date change to avoid a clash with the Bristol trip.

Early June

Date	Time	Group	Venue or Meeting point
Mon 4th	10:00 am	Italian	Lynda's house
Mon 4th	7-9 pm	Bridge	Ivanhoe Social Club
Tue 5th	TBA	Walking	TBA
Wed 6th	10:00 am	Music Appreciation	TBA
Wed 6th	2:00 pm	Computer	16 Winchester Way
Thu 7th	10:00 am	Digital Photography	16 Winchester Way
Thu 7th	10:00 am	Recorder	TBA

*For trips, outings, walks and other events which meet away from the usual venues, see further details in the relevant Group Reports below, or on our website www.ashbyu3a.co.uk

MONTHLY MEETING

April 22nd

Subject: SOS children's villages

Speaker: Peter Fitzpatrick

Peter and Pat Fitzpatrick have toured the world taking photographs of children in their homes and villages since Peter retired from being a school teacher. They have made it their business to use their extensive photographic album to highlight the plight of children in some of the most deprived areas of the globe. Peter explained to us all that here in the Western World we take for granted the basics for modern living such as having a home and hope and happiness. The photographs we saw were taken of children and young adults who could only aspire to such basic concepts. Some of the statistics we were given were simply staggering i.e. 19,000 children under the age of 5 years old die daily somewhere in the world and 1 in 10 children have no parents at all. Peter explained that the SOS Children's Villages charity were involved in building orphanages for children and helping them to have a better life than they otherwise would have had and encouraged us to support the charity's work.

Next Monthly Meeting on Tue 22nd May at 2 pm:

Carol and Steve Robson are "Fool's Gold" who will play some acoustic music and explain the stories behind the songs.

Tea Rota etc. for the monthly meetings

Month	Tea and Coffee Rota	Meeters and Greeters	Reporting Groups
May	Margaret Baxendale + team	Val & Trevor Reed	Lunch & Medium Walks
June	Anne Donegan, Maureen Broad, Lesley Thomas	Dorothy Chapman	Music Appreciation & Quiz
July	Pat and Terry Bithell, Julia Fraser and Henry Sharples	Dorothy Chapman	Recorder & Short Walks

GROUP REPORTS

Arts and Crafts – Leader Shirley Bunting 01530 415755

Since Christmas we have had only two or three people at the meetings, due to illness or holidays. We haven't a project at the moment but anyone is welcome to join us for a cup of tea and a chat.

Shirley

Bird Watching - birdwatch@ashbyu3a.co.uk

The group are looking for a new leader. If you would like to help please contact our Group Co-ordinator James Bloor on interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk

The group have not been out this month and the date and venue for their next trip has yet to be decided.

Bridge – Leader Neil Roberts 01530 455957

This is Bridge for players of all levels playing friendly Contract Bridge with some chatter. Several of our number are "beginners" or "returners" and we have experienced players who are happy to help others improve their game. We now have about 20 active players.

The group has 2 venues. They meet at the Hood Park Leisure Centre in the 1st floor function room for afternoon sessions and at Ivanhoe Social Club in the front lounge for the evening sessions. Free car parking is available at both venues, but must be signed in at Hood Park.

If you would like to know more contact Neil on 01530 455957 or Pat Ford on 01827 830672

Calligraphy – Leader Jenny Slawson 01283 229718

April 10th

The group continued to work on their new font with the strange name - Gothic Textura Quadrata

Canasta – Leaders Tom & Gillian Massey 01283 212380

Tom and Gill's canasta group will be taking a break for the summer due to Tom having other pressing duties.

Meetings will resume sometime around September, notice will be given in the newsletter and on the website.

Meetings are normally on the 2nd and 4th Thursday mornings each month at 10 am to 12 so if you are interested in joining them when they restart, contact them on the above number or email canasta@ashbyu3a.co.uk

Computers – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

We meet twice monthly to try to solve anyone's computer problems and to better learn how to use them whether they are PCs, Macs, iPads or Android Tablets. All are welcome. No experience necessary.

April 17th

Five of us turned up today, with not many problems.

Dave needed help in understanding internet download and upload speeds, and how to use a suitable app. to measure the speeds at his house as he appears to have a very slow connection.

We discussed the problem of varying speeds dependant on a variety of factors, including traffic, technology, fibre-optic cable versus twisted pair and usage.

We also looked at how the speed varies on the same device whether it is hardwired to the router or connected via Wi-Fi.

JD discussed changing phone contracts with Mike as his two year contract with Tesco is now up. It was determined that a simple pay as you go arrangement for 5 pounds per month should be more than adequate.

The question of just when the date of the next meeting for any of the Groups changes to the following one was broached as currently it apparently automatically changes as soon as the meeting starts (It should change 1 hour after the meeting starts). This could confuse those who check their diaries belatedly! The webmasters will be looking into this!

Digital Photography – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

We meet to try to understand how to get the best out of our digital cameras whether they are simple compact cameras or full-blooded DSLRs and how to edit or modify the pictures afterwards. We try to get out and practice every other month. We do not as yet enter competitions.

April 5th

On a perfect Spring day, four photographers travelled to Bradgate Park.

The air was cool, the sun was bright and the Park was full of happy wanderers. We split up for an hour and eventually repaired to the Tea Rooms at the main car park.

The main roadway through the Park was reminiscent of a Victorian Outing, with folks of all ages strolling with their families. The open spaces were less well frequented, but there were groups out and about, mainly of younger ones out with parents or grandparents.

The main wildlife consisted of deer of various sorts, which seemed quite un-put-out by the walkers.

We will look at our photos next time.

Drawing and Painting – Contact Chris Dogherty 01530 411148

April 18th

Our April meeting was blessed by a beautiful spring day so we took ourselves off to Staunton Harold and enjoyed the tranquil scenery and location sketching, followed by coffee at the Ferrers centre!!!!

Next meeting 10am at Megan's house, and the theme will be "Transport through the ages" , hopefully inspired by this year's exhibits at the Ashby arts festival "Art about town" gallery.

Family History – Leader John Dogherty 01530 411148

April 11th

A good turnout with six in attendance.

A hive of activity, with most catching up on progress already made.

JH has made great strides pinning down his great grandparents and their family. He was assisted by a neat bit of 'triangulation'.

Audrey (not present) reported by remote that she has found many more relatives to pursue via the Worldwide option on Ancestry. We wait with interest to see the results.

JD has uncovered two marriages he was not aware of in his family and is working through the links, as well as making strides in reconstructing in 3D the schools his great grandfather studied at and ran.

He has had enormous help from a member of U3A in the Northeast who undertook some research for him in Durham. Not all the evidence is on-line!

Gardening - Leader Paul Dean 01283 295987

The Gardening Group is one of the largest interest groups. The committee try hard to provide a selection of activities suitable for all, including talks on various topics, trips out to well-known gardens and social events where plants are swapped and garden problems are solved! There is always food and drink at the end of each meeting and occasionally prizes to be won! Please come along and meet us and give the gardening club a try.

April 19th

After weeks of rain and cold weather our April visit to Coton Manor Gardens was on a gloriously hot sunny day. What a treat we were in for ! The gardens were beautifully designed with interesting pathways leading from floral areas to wooded areas. There was a well sheltered courtyard with seating for the café which served a variety of light lunches, drinks and cakes. Of course plants were available for sale from the large nursery.

History – Leader Jane Harris 01530 838025

April 26th

'Terror from the Skies' - An account of a Zeppelin Raid on the East Midlands by Stephen Flinders.

An excellent turnout of 38+ were entertained by Stephen with his account of a Zeppelin raid on the East Midlands in January 1916.

Stephen outlined the early history of the Zeppelins from their conception by Graf von Zeppelin whilst observing spherical observation balloons used in the American Civil War to the flight of the first series of the tube shaped dirigibles L1 to L4 in 1900. These used Hydrogen, as Helium was only available in the USA. These all ended in crashes.

By the outbreak of War in 1914 von Zeppelin had persuaded the military that they would be of use not only for observation but for attack.

They were huge (585 feet long),unwieldy, and had primitive navigation systems, needing to lower a man down on a rope, in a gondola, through any cloud below them in order to see where they were.

There had been raids from 1915 onwards, but that in January 1916 was intended to hit Liverpool. In the event none of the nine craft launched from northwest Germany and Denmark penetrated further than Wednesbury.

Ilkeston was bombed because the then steel works were mistaken for Sheffield.

It seems that during the raid a stage performance at the Theatre Royal, Ilkeston in which a Zeppelin Raid featured drew great admiration for the sound effects!

Stephen displayed a time lapse graphic showing the tracks of each of the nine craft as they zigzagged all over the place like disoriented fish, before finally returning home. 70 people died in the raid.

Not all made it back. One came down on land and the entire crew of 18 were picked up and arrested by one unarmed special constable.

Stephen recounted several contemporary stories including lucky escapes and unlucky deaths.

Finally, we were given a laugh in the form of a Colman's Mustard Raid predictor. Stephen has reconstructed one from an example in a museum, and it had predicted a raid on Ilkeston for the previous day. Strangely no Zeppelins turned up...

Industrial Heritage – Leader Mike Stow 01530 469152

April 25th – Ironbridge Museums, Shropshire

A group of 16 set off in cars from Featherbed Lane for the Blists Hill site of the Ironbridge Museum near Telford. Despite leaving 08.30 in the rush hour we all made good time and arrived just before the 10.00 opening time. Many of us had visited some of the museums last year, but not Blists Hill or Coalport Pottery, and our annual passport had but 2 days validity left to run. So those of us with passports got in for free.

After the customary cup of coffee, we entered the Museum through an interactive light show of various aspects of the 1900's, the time in history the museum is based on.

Out into the sunshine and we split up and wandered our own ways around the streets from the bank, to the butchers, the bakers and the candle-stick maker. On to the fish and chip shop, pub, sweet shop and the foundry which was pouring some new castings with molten iron from the blast furnace. We chatted to the local bobby with his dog, to the haberdasher and the woman walking a Shire horse. Some later had a ride on a cart behind two Shires. There are many more shops, homes and premises and I suspect few of us saw everything.

After very large lunches at the Brewery Inn in Coalport just over a mile from Blists Hill we drove back just 0.5 mile to the Coalport China site. We arrived just in time for the 14.30 tour. After looking at various examples made at the works till early 1900's, we were taken to see the processes involved in producing the china and finally to look inside a kiln at the firing process. We all left at the 16.00 closing time and after a further cup of coffee, we set off for the journey home.

Italian Group – Leader Lynda Hall 01530 415922

April 11th

Only three students today, so Lynda worked us hard. Mainly reading and interpreting pieces after listening. Cookery and shopping with much emphasis on ways of saying things. This included good revision. Finally a party! Sorting out who was saying what is always a test.

Literature Group - Leader Sandra Harris 01530 416653

The Group met on the 10th April to discuss Anthony Burgess's biography of Hemingway before reading "For whom the bell tolls" this month.

Luncheon Group – Leaders Colin & Sharon Woodland 01530 413867

We are a group of men and ladies who enjoy a meal together, at various pubs and restaurants around the area. Everyone is welcome, all we ask is that you sign the form at the prior monthly meeting, email luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk or phone Colin & Sharon, so we can book the relevant number of seats.

April 12th – Bull's Head, Wilson

Despite the absence of our new leaders Colin and Sharon, who were in Singapore, we still managed a good turnout of 20 members who assembled at the Bull's Head. Some said that they hadn't been there for ages and many had never been before but everyone seemed to enjoy the food, atmosphere and service.

We seemed to strangely divide ourselves, as on the bottom 2 tables nobody had pudding whereas on the top 2 tables everyone had pudding! The power of peer pressure! Regardless of the number of courses eaten, we all had a good time and many people said that they would be returning soon.

Music Appreciation – Leader David Oakley 01530 563409

April 4th

With an apology from Neil there were nine of us assembled for this month's music group meeting, kindly hosted by Ann.

Lesley set us away with her choice of two songs by Matt Monroe, a singer clearly popular with most of us. She chose 'Born Free' and his rendition of 'He Ain't Heavy, he's my Brother'.

Dorothy selected a track from her soloist's collection with 'Vivaldi's Flute Concerto No2'. Played by Jean-Pierre Rampal, the flautist personally credited with returning to the flute the popularity as a solo classical instrument.

Sally then related a recent radio discussion about the suggested lack of training for the pipe organ and the impact this has on the scarcity of church organists. As such she chose two organ pieces, Bach's 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' and Handel's 'The Cuckoo and the Nightingale', a piece most hadn't heard before.

It was good to welcome Trish and Paul back from their travels and Trish chose two obvious favourites with Andrea Bocelli singing 'Time to say Goodbye' and Mantovani's orchestra with 'Smoke gets in your Eyes'. It seems he was Britain's most successful album act before the Beatles.

Paul had also chosen two of his self-described 'gravel voiced' favourites, Neil Diamond singing 'Will you love me Tomorrow' and Chris Rea 'Road to Hell'.

Nev had a leaning towards Elvis this month but from an unexpected direction. Firstly Johnny Cash singing 'Your own personal Jesus', a remark made by Priscilla Presley about Elvis, and Richard Thomson singing 'Galway to Graceland':

"Oh, she dressed in the dark and whispered amen,
She was pretty in pink and was a young girl again,
Twenty years married and she never thought twice,
She sneaked out the door and walked into the night,
And silver wings carried her over the sea,
From the west coast of Ireland to West Tennessee,
To be with her sweetheart, she left everything,
From Galway to Graceland to be with the king".

Mike then proved that technology can work when you need it as he had brought a DVD of Marizo, the Portuguese traditional fado singer in concert, a singer he had heard by chance and of whom he was now a big fan.

David followed this up with two amusing tracks from Garrison Keillor's 'Prairie Home Companion' album. Finally Ann chose 'Summertime' with Ella Fitzgerald and Satchmo, a song that had a special memory for her and then 'I am the ruler of the Queens Navy' from 'HMS Pinafore, no longer fashionable but still a favourite.

Quiz group - Leader Malcolm Bird 01530 563872

The group meet at the Bull and Lion, Packington. The Start time is 2.30 and involves tables of four. You do not need to arrange a team before the meeting as teams will be organised on the day. This enables single individuals to take part - and to make new friends by joining an ad hoc team. Tea and coffee are served. Total cost £1.20 of which 20p goes to a kitty for prizes.

Recorder group - Leader Joan Gibson - recorder@ashbyu3a.co.uk

The recorder group meet to make music in a relaxed, fun way. I would hope that we would be able to cater for a wide range of experience and skill. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursday mornings each month. New members would be very welcome. Complete beginners would find it difficult to catch up though.

April 5th

Three of us this morning, so we played:

Eriskay Love Lilt,
St Anthony Chorale,
3 Easy Motets,
Variations on Greensleeves,
No 1 of 4 Handel Minuets.

Supper Club – Contact Colin Ellis 01530 272592 - supper@ashbyu3a.co.uk

This group visits local pubs and restaurants for an evening meal. We meet on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7 for 7.30 pm. The intention is that we will jointly decide on venues and hopefully members will take it in turn to organise it.

Everyone is welcome, all we ask is that you sign the sheet by the display board at the monthly meeting, or contact Colin, by phone or by email, so we can book the relevant number of seats.

There may sometimes be a limit on numbers depending on the venue's ability to cater for larger groups, in which case places will be offered strictly on a first come, first served basis. There may also need to be a cut-off date for bookings. This will be stated on the bookings list.

If anyone wishes to join us but has difficulties with transport or doesn't wish to drive at night, contact Colin at the number/email address above, and we will try to arrange for some car-sharing.

April 26th - The George & Dragon, Thringstone

This month we visited the George and Dragon at Thringstone, a pub which most of us had not been to for many years, if at all. It was good to see the bar full of locals, as so many pubs are very quiet on weekday evenings. It may have been something to do with it being "Pie and a Pint night".

Despite some of our regulars being on holiday or having other commitments, their places at the table were taken by some welcome new faces. The 10 of us who turned up had the back room all to ourselves with a large table filling the space.

Half of us opted for starters, which gave the others a bit of a wait for their first (main) course. The menu gave an excellent choice at a range of prices and everyone could find something they fancied. The food came up promptly was very good, tasty and generous. Despite vowing not to eat pudding after the large main course, nearly everyone succumbed to dessert once the menu was put in front of them!

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, the conversation was lively, and we all went home happy and full.

Trips and Outings Group - Contact Margaret Howlett 01530 461774

Bristol coach trip – May 24th

The coach is now fully booked and there is a waiting list for late cancellations. Contact Margaret for details.

After a busy month in March, there were no trips or outings in April, but there is much planning going on for the Bristol trip.

WALKS

The walk leaders will be at the meeting place whatever the weather and will only cancel the walk in consultation with those who turn up on the day. All dogs must be kept under control at all times. Walking boots or strong shoes are recommended. Be prepared for bad weather by taking warm waterproof clothing. Leaders act in a voluntary capacity. All ramblers walk at their own risk.

Walking Group - Leader Bob Baxendale 01530 481435

The walking group usually does walks of between 7-8 miles, twice a month, and we normally have a lunch stop at a pub near to, or at the end of, the walk.

April 17th. Dale Abbey, Derbys

Fourteen walkers assembled at The Carpenters Arms for the walk from Dale Abbey. We started by walking down the road opposite the pub to the village centre and stopped at the first stile to view the small All Saints Church. Through the stile we came to a very impressive large arch of what was once the East Window of the Abbey. To avoid the wetlands in the bottom of the dale we walked along the minor road to the head of the Dale. Next stop was at another Ancient Monument, a Hermits cave carved into the sandstone in the 16th century. We then walked along a bridle track and crossed the Spondon to Ilkeston road, to enter the Locko Park estate. Here we paused for a coffee stop in view of the country house which is home to the Drury-Lowe family. The return route took us through a small wood and then several muddy footpaths to enter Dale Abbey. A short stroll through the village led us back to the pub in good time for lunch. About 6miles.

Medium walks – Leader Carole Harriman 01530 222634

The Medium Walk group do walks of up to 6 miles. Anyone interested please contact Carole.

April 9th. Melbourne & Wilson

9 walkers met at Melbourne Hall on a very pleasant but overcast day. We headed off down Castle Street towards the cemetery, and then on to Kings Newton and open fields towards the Cloud Trail. Then we followed the Cloud Trail until the turning for Wilson, where we had a coffee stop, and on through the village of Wilson, heading up hill just before the golf course, where we had magnificent views of the surrounding towns and villages. Then on over fields towards Melbourne Lake and Hall, admiring the lovely yew hedge cut like clouds. Back to our cars, it was a 4 mile walk, and the sun had come out leaving a lovely spring day.

Short walks Group – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

The short walk group organises walks using well defined paths and routes without stiles. The maximum length is 3 miles. All are welcome.

April 20th. Burton upon Trent Washlands

9 members met at the Stapenhill car park between the two road bridges over the Trent, near St Peters Church. It was a glorious day and we set off by the banks of the Trent towards the ferry bridge built in the 1890s to replace the original ferry. Having crossed the river we followed the bank across the river from Stapenhill, in the direction of the Meadowbank centre. The bridge we were intending to use to cross the small stream was closed so we went to the bridge near the library and straight to the Bookichino cafe in the library. We consumed our drinks and cakes while we chatted in the sun. We then returned on the path away from the main river and joined the foot bridge nearer Burton and took the causeway and bridge back to Stapenhill. We crossed over the road to the new bridge by the pedestrian high bridge admiring the flowers, trees and the bird life.

Your Committee

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Colin Ellis	Treasurer	treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 272592
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